

PROJECT INFORMATION DOCUMENT (PID) CONCEPT STAGE

Report No.: PIDC37036

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Project Name	Providing an Education of Quality in Haiti (PEQH) (P155191)
Region	LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN
Country	Haiti
Sector(s)	General education sector (10%), Primary education (90%)
Theme(s)	Education for all (90%), Managing for development results (10%)
Lending Instrument	Investment Project Financing
Project ID	P155191
Borrower(s)	MENFP
Implementing Agency	MENFP
Environmental Category	B-Partial Assessment
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Concept Review Decision	Track I - The review did authorize the preparation to continue

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I. Introduction and Context

Country Context

Haiti remains the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere and one of the poorest countries in the world, with a 2014 GDP per capita of US\$824. Almost 60% of the population lives below the national poverty line and inequality is high, with wealth and economic opportunity concentrated around Port-au-Prince. Access to basic services is limited, particularly in rural areas, and Haiti ranks 168th out of 187 countries in the Human Development Index.

Five years after the catastrophic earthquake of 2010, reconstruction efforts have yielded tangible progress, but uncertainty lies ahead. The earthquake killed an estimated 230,000 people (including scores of professionals and public servants) and displaced 1.5 million, causing losses of 120 percent of GDP. Reconstruction followed in the wake of the humanitarian effort, and progress has been made in several important areas. Extreme poverty has fallen, infrastructure and private sector activity have expanded, and health and education indicators have improved since the early 2000s, thanks in part to substantial expansion of donor assistance after the earthquake. The Haitian state is

now entering a period of transition, as external aid and concessional borrowing decline and political power is handed over in nearly simultaneous municipal, parliamentary, and presidential elections in 2015.

Human capital is one of the most binding constraints to sustainable and inclusive growth. The country's young population, cultural assets, global diaspora, and access to large, developed markets are just some of its many endowments. However, without universal acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy, and a skilled and healthy labor force, these endowments are less likely to create real opportunities to improve the well-being of Haitian citizens. The Government taking the lead in ensuring the provision of basic education, which Haitians value, can also help in rebuilding the weak social contract.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

Needs are substantial across the education sector. From early childhood through tertiary, public provision of education is insufficient to meet demand, and non-public providers have stepped in to fill the gap, operating nearly all pre-primary schools, over 80 percent of primary schools, and over 70 percent of secondary schools. All providers operate with little oversight or accountability for providing a quality education and ensuring learning. At the same time, the majority of families struggle to finance education costs, which absorb 10 percent of consumption on average for households with children in primary school.

The Government of Haiti (GOH) has prioritized primary education as an entry point for public financing of access, contributing to substantial increases in school participation. The GOH has financed tuition waivers to non-public providers through the donor-funded Education for All (Education Pour Tous; EPT) program since 2007 and the Government-funded Universal, Free, and Obligatory Education Program (Programme de Scolarisation Universelle Gratuite et Obligatoire; PSUGO) since 2011. At their combined peak between 2011 and 2014, these two programs financed the school fees of over 60 percent of all primary students in Haiti, with PSUGO representing about 20 percent of domestic public spending on education. As a result, the net primary enrollment rate has risen from about 60 percent in the early 2000s to between 70 and 80 percent in 2012.

Yet student achievement remains very weak. The average Haitian child enters first grade between one and two years late, due to a combination of household financial constraints that delay school entry and schools often demanding that children receive at least one year of preprimary in order to prepare for first grade. Once in school, 13 percent of first graders repeat, and only about half will reach the sixth grade. Student learning is also very weak. For example, assessments conducted in a sample of EPT and non-EPT schools in 2009 found that the average third grader could only read 23 words per minute, well below the estimated speed of 35-60 words per minute required for comprehension of a basic text, and a 2015 pre-pilot of a fourth grade math assessment by MENFP (Ministère d'Éducation et Formation Professionnelle) in both public and non-public schools found that student scores were only slightly above what would be achieved by random guessing.

Poor and rural children have the lowest levels of access and student achievement. Among primary school-age children, only 86 percent of poor, rural children are enrolled, compared to 96 percent of the non-poor, urban. Among 10-14 year olds who are in school, over 70 percent of poor, rural children are two or more years over age for their grade, compared to 32 percent of their non-poor, urban counterparts. Long distances to school and family needs for children's agricultural labor are among the main causes cited by rural parents.

The low average quality of education provided by both public and non-public schools, coupled with the deprivations associated with poverty, contribute to these low levels of achievement. Physical and social environments are lacking, and schools often do not provide safe, healthy contexts for learning. For example, only 54 percent of urban and 33 percent of rural primary schools had a source of drinking water according to the 2010-11 national school census. In most departments of the country, the rate of school electrification is well under 20 percent, compared to the Sub-Saharan Africa average of 28 percent. The quality of teaching is also very weak. Classroom observations of primary school teachers in Nord and Nord Est found that the majority of teachers use ineffective pedagogical approaches and often struggle with content. Beyond these supply-side factors, the deprivations associated with poverty, including lack of early childhood development, need for child labor, ongoing nutritional deprivations, and relatively high costs of education that families cannot meet all reduce children's ability to successfully participate in school.

In an effort to start addressing these quality challenges, the current administration has taken steps to increase its oversight and enforce minimum requirements for schools to operate. After decades of uncontrolled growth in the non-public sector, MENFP has taken initial measures to regulate schools, for example by requiring all schools and teachers to register for identification documents. Importantly, MENFP recently announced a set of minimum physical criteria related to safe infrastructure, water, sanitation, and evidence of student testing that schools must meet in order to operate, and then took steps to enforce these criteria by shutting down some schools and excluding others from PSUGO and EPT. These actions represent a first step towards increasing the quality of education services supplied.

At the same time, the recent gains in access are under threat. Both EPT and PSUGO have stopped financing tuition waivers for new cohorts of 1st and 2nd graders, effectively shifting the financial burden of primary education back to households. Estimates from the Bank put the number of children at risk of not being able to attend school due to the phasing out of these programs at around 300,000 and growing annually. As a donor-financed program designed to fund a full course of primary education for specific cohorts of students, EPT is coming to a close. PSUGO has not taken on the financing of new cohorts in EPT schools as expected, and has also stopped financing new cohorts because of the perceived low quality of the non-public schools in the program and the uncertainty about the legality and continuation of the program's main source of funding, the National Education Fund (Fond National pour l'Education; FNE). While the GOH has emphasized the need to grow public supply in addition to financing the non-public sector, no systematic investment plans have been produced. In this context, support from international partners for children's access to school continues to be critical.

In this context, the Bank is providing strategic technical assistance to MENFP to address financing and access. As PSUGO phases out, no clear plans have emerged for alternative models of financing access to primary education. Through ongoing Non-Lending Technical Assistance (NLTA), the Bank continues to monitor the effects on school enrollment with periodic phone surveys of school directors and is coordinating with development partners to support the GOH in articulating and costing options for sustaining access in the medium term.

Building on the Government's growing interest in creating accountability in the system, the Bank is also working with MENFP and other partners to develop a quality assurance system for the sector. The system includes tools to measure key dimensions of school learning conditions (including

infrastructure, water and sanitation, leadership, pedagogy, and others), tools to assess student learning, and corresponding standards, grounded in existing MENFP regulations. This quality assurance system will provide a means to consistently measure outcomes across schools in Haiti, support schools in developing plans to improve, and measure results of interventions in the sector. The quality assurance system would also serve as the technical foundation for an eventual school accreditation process.

Relationship to CAS

The proposed Project is an integral part of the Haiti Country Partnership Framework FY16-FY19 (CPF). The second of three areas of focus in the CPF is human capital, and the fifth objective (of nine total) is to improve access to quality primary education. The proposed Project will also support the CPF's cross-cutting theme of transparency, accountability, and sustainability in governance, by focusing on institutional strengthening and citizen engagement. By strengthening the public education system, which disproportionately serves the poorest, and by increasing access to quality education for children in disadvantaged communities, the Project would contribute to the twin goals of ending extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity.

II. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Proposed Development Objective(s) (From PCN)

The objectives of the Project are to: (i) improve learning conditions in selected public and non-public primary schools, (ii) maintain enrollment of students in selected public and non-public primary schools; and (iii) strengthen public management of the education sector.

Key Results (From PCN)

- (i) Learning conditions improved in select public primary schools
- (ii) Learning conditions improved in select non-public primary schools
- (iii) Number of students enrolled in select public primary schools
- (iv) Number of students enrolled in select non-public primary schools
- (v) Indicator related to MENFP's capacity to collect and utilize data in its management of the sector – to be specified

III. Preliminary Description

Concept Description

Through its current Project, the Bank supports several initiatives addressing primary education access and quality, providing a broad base for the proposed Project to build on. Under the Education For All Phase II (EFA II) Project, the Bank is investing USD \$109 Million (2012-2017) primarily in non-public school tuition waivers (EPT), rural public school construction, school health and nutrition, teacher training, and capacity building in MENFP. Activities are spread across over 1,400 schools in eight departments, and few schools receive more than one intervention (e.g. the tuition waiver program and the school health and nutrition program are provided to different schools).

Several important lessons have been learned from EFA II and will be integrated into the proposed Project. For example, schools participating in the tuition waiver program have larger student bodies and lower rates of late entry and grade repetition compared to schools that applied but were not selected, indicating the high demand for free education and the effectiveness of conditioning financing on specific rules. However, periodic verification exercises have found that the program

has been less successful in enforcing minimum inputs for learning, such as the provision of textbooks to students, due to a lack of consequences for noncompliance. Also, interventions to improve learning conditions, such as teacher training and school feeding, have been dispersed across schools, reducing their impact on education quality. Under the proposed Project, interventions would be coordinated in a smaller number of schools, and for non-public schools, financing would be conditioned on achieving specific results. Financing would also be provided for all students in the school, and not for individual grade cohorts, to allow schools to receive a critical mass of funding to be able to improve the quality of education provided.

In addition, two major commitments remain from EFA II that will be assumed under the proposed Project. While the tuition waiver program is phasing out (as described above), financing for the sixth grade year of the program's final cohort is not available under EFA II. Regarding public school construction, the Project is currently financing the functioning of schools in 61 rural communities in the Grand Sud (the departments of Sud, Sud Est, Grand Anse, and Nippes), the majority of which are operating under temporary shelter until their school buildings are constructed. While construction will continue until Project closing, approximately 30 communities will remain without physical school buildings. In addition, MENFP has not taken the expected steps to assume the recurrent costs of any of the schools. Active policy dialogue on sector financing will address this issue as well, but in the interim both the final tuition waiver cohort and ensuring access to schools in the 61 rural communities are important commitments to be assumed under the proposed Project.

Project concept: Diminished resources, continued policy uncertainty, and institutional weakness call for a focused and strategic approach that supports access to quality primary education, while strengthening MENFP's capacity to manage the education system. The activities under the Project are those critical to improving the quality of education, inter alia: assessment and data collection; provision of critical inputs corresponding to needs identified through assessment, including basic infrastructure, teacher and school director training, and school feeding; as well as technical capacity building to increase efficient, effective functioning of MENFP. Through the planned activities, the Project aims to focus interventions in order to produce results in terms of quality primary education, establish systems to track progress, incentivize evidence-based decision-making, and strengthen the capacity of MENFP to manage the system. To do this, the Project would incorporate: (i) the lessons learned from the Education For All Phase I (2007-2012) and Phase II (2012-2017) Projects and (ii) the new realities and priorities of the GOH five years after the earthquake. The Project would align with MENFP's forthcoming Operational Plan 2016-2020, and exploit opportunities to leverage other development partners' available financing and to maximize synergies with partners' activities.

Proposed instrument: The proposed loan instrument would be an IDA Grant in the amount of US \$30 million. Preliminary discussions have led to a Project structure consisting of three components. One sub-component would be results-based, and would disburse against Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs) consisting of implementation progress and performance targets agreed with the GOH and related to actions that contribute to improving the capacity of MENFP to manage the education system. All other components and sub-components would disburse according to traditional methods, and would finance goods, consultant services, and non-consultant services relating to the carrying out of the requisite technical cooperation for each priority policy area. Activities would initially be concentrated in the Grand Sud in order to maximize impacts.

Component 1: Expanding Access to Quality, Public Primary Education in Underserved, Poor

Communities. (US \$17.5 Million) This component would provide access to primary education in 61 poor, rural communities in the Grand Sud where schools are not available (as identified under the EFA Phase II Project) through a school network model tailored to the situation of each community. Specifically, in communities located within a reasonable distance of an existing public school, transportation for children to access the school would be financed, and the existing public school would be supported in upgrading its learning environment through a school improvement plan. For those communities without access to an existing public school, “satellite” classrooms would be built for early primary children unable to travel substantial distances. The Bank continues active dialogue with other development partners to ensure support is provided in the poorest areas of the country, and if additional financing becomes available, poverty and weak educational outcomes would help determine priority departments for intervention.

Activities to be financed under this component would therefore include, inter alia: transportation; classroom construction in a small number of communities (all meeting basic infrastructure and other standards as defined in the quality assurance system); initial operating costs of all classrooms constructed; school director training in leadership and management, including support in formulating and implementing school improvement plans based on the quality assurance system assessment; teacher training to improve pedagogical skills and content knowledge; costs of school improvement plan implementation (including minor works); school feeding; and community engagement activities.

Sustainable and effective data collection and communication approaches, exploiting ICT as appropriate, would be utilized to support all activities. A crucial aspect of this component would be the use of the quality assurance system to identify needs and track progress.

Component 2: Supporting Access to Quality, Non-Public Primary Education in Poor Communities. (US \$7.5 Million) This component would consist of two sub-components:

(1) Support to the final tuition waiver program cohort (US \$2.5 Million), which would finance the sixth grade for approximately 28,000 students currently supported under EFA II.

(2) Support to MENFP's results-based financing mechanism of non-public schools (US \$5 Million), which would include, inter alia: (i) assessing the learning conditions and learning outcomes of participating schools using the quality assurance system, (ii) training school directors in effective management and leadership, (iii) training teachers to improve pedagogical skills and content knowledge, and (iv) funding per-student subsidies conditional on meeting well-defined standards on learning conditions and learning outcomes. All students in approximately 20 primary schools (grades 1 through 6) would be supported, and all would be located in the Grand Sud in order to leverage support provided to building MENFP's local capacity under Component 3. All schools would be required to meet quality assurance standards in order to continue to receive financing, and a list of eligible schools would be maintained to facilitate the rapid incorporation of new schools to the program.

Component 3: Providing Technical Assistance, Institutional Strengthening to MENFP, and Project Management. (US \$5 Million) This component would consist of two sub-components:

(1) Technical Assistance (US \$4 Million) to provide strategic support to MENFP in improving its functioning through, inter alia: (i) support to the directorates of the four geographic departments

in which component 1 and 2 activities are located, the technical directorates charged with regulating the primary sector, and the technical directorates charged with data collection and learning assessments in building and using sustainable monitoring mechanisms including quality assurance tools and in incorporating evidence into policymaking; and (ii) financing sustained technical assistance and capacity building through a placement program for internationally trained individuals of Haitian origin to work within MENFP. This component would also provide financing for technical assistance for the achievement of DLIs, as well as Project Monitoring and Evaluation and the associated costs of implementing the Project.

(2) Disbursement-Linked Indicator (DLI) based Strengthening Public Management (US \$1 Million). This sub-component would disburse based on the achievement of three indicators related to tangible improvements in MENFP's functioning. While specific indicators are to be determined, MENFP has agreed in principle that these indicators should be related to the Ministry's capacity to collect and utilize data in its management of the sector. The choice of a DLI approach is justified as a strategy to focus the attention and the efforts of the MENFP on the results, and less on the leverage than the value of the DLI would have.

Cross-cutting areas:

Social: A social assessment was carried out during the preparation of the Education for All (APG 1). Among the findings were: i) elite capture by school directors, ii) conflict created by the infusion of money into schools/school management committees, iii) teachers abandoning rural areas, and iv) inequality being exacerbated between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. The Project addresses these through instilling a series of checks and balances at the local level, involving community participants in the management of Project resources, ensuring that Project resources intended to be managed by communities would effectively be managed by them, providing employment opportunities in rural areas for trained teachers, and having a highly targeted Project design, such that the Project benefits are enjoyed by those populations traditionally underserved by public services. The social assessment prepared in the previous project continues to be relevant for the Project at hand and thus will not be updated.

Gender: In terms of primary school participation, girls and boys enroll at roughly equal rates. However, boys are more likely to be overage, while girls start to drop out of school earlier than boys, around the age of 14, potentially related to social factors such as early marriage. Recent data suggests that in Haiti, 17 percent of girls are married by age 18. In addition, gender-based violence and women's disadvantage in the labor market are important realities in the Haitian context. Interventions designed under the proposed Project would be informed by this context, for example incorporating gender considerations into the design of sanitation infrastructure, teacher training, and community engagement activities. The Project would also track gender-disaggregated data on numbers of beneficiaries and on student learning outcomes.

Citizen engagement: The proposed Project would engage beneficiaries in several ways. The quality assurance system that will be used under Components 1 and 2 will include a parent and student survey, and so measures of school learning conditions will incorporate parent and student feedback. The rural communities targeted under Component 1 have already been mobilized under EFA II and are actively involved in the oversight of the operation of their temporary schools and the construction of the permanent structures. For both Components 1 and 2, a focus on data and leveraging ICT will create direct chains of communication between parents and MENFP, as well as school officials and MENFP. For example, schools participating in the results-based financing will

be required to provide cell phone numbers for a subset of parents, so that they can be directly contacted for feedback. Furthermore, the safeguards official within the PIU will be in charge of visiting project sites regularly to document grievances raised by the population and address them properly. Indicators to measure these aspects will be developed for the Results Framework.

Coordination with development partners: The Bank continues an active dialogue with major development partners (e.g. IDB, European Union, UNESCO, Donor Group on education) in order to align interventions and pursue potential opportunities for additional financing for the proposed Project. Given the potential for such additional financing, the proposed Project would be structured such that new resources would go towards scaling up well-functioning activities, inter alia: adding new rural communities in need of public school construction, adding non-public schools to the results-based financing mechanism, or adding results to the DLI sub-component.

Research agenda: In partnership with MENFP, the Bank will develop a research agenda and seek financing opportunities to carry out under the proposed Project. For example, an impact evaluation of the results-based financing mechanism would exploit the random selection of schools into the program and the potential for gradual phase-in of additional schools if new financing becomes available.

IV. Safeguard Policies that might apply

Safeguard Policies Triggered by the Project	Yes	No	TBD
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	x		
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04		x	
Forests OP/BP 4.36		x	
Pest Management OP 4.09		x	
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11		x	
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10		x	
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	x		
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37		x	
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50		x	
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60		x	

V. Financing (in USD Million)

Total Project Cost:	30.00	Total Bank Financing:	30.00
Financing Gap:	0.00		
Financing Source			Amount
BORROWER/RECIPIENT			0.00
International Development Association (IDA)			30.00
Total			30.00

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